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The Mass Towns Database:Initial Report

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The Mass Towns Database contains values for approximately 50 variables for the 351 cities and towns of Massachusetts. It was prepared as part of the 1992/93 program of the Center for Economic Development of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. The format of this database is a matrix with each column representing a variable, and each row one of the 351 towns. Values in each row are tab delimited, and lines are delimited by carriage returns. This means the database may be easily converted for use by spreadsheets, database management programs, and statistical packages on all computer platforms.

The purpose of this database is to combine in one place data from a variety of sources that is important in economic development decisions. At present, it consists primarily of data from the 1990 Census, state agencies, the McConnell report on land use in Massachusetts, and the Boston Globe. Most of the variables are concerned with income, occupation, and land use.

Listed below are the variables in the database with a brief description of each. Variables that are text have names ending in a "\$". Those which are counts end in "#", those that are rates end in "%", those that are pointers to another database end in "ID". Other variables (such as median household income or town coordinates) have no special symbol. This convention was followed to link to certain reporting features provided in a program (Polygon Explorer) that provides a visualization and analysis capability.

Errors: Only parts of the database have been thoroughly checked, and there remain several known errors in the poverty and land use data. Overall, the error rate appears to be less than 0.1 percent. In the file containing town outlines that is used with this data and Polygon Explorer, there are currently three towns with data errors.

Database Contents as of June 30, 1993

StateID Links for entire state.

Town\$ City and town names.

County\$ Counties.

city/town\$ City or town status.

RPA\$ Regional Planning Associations.

Pop# Population, 1990 Census.

PopDensity Population per square mile, 1990. Calculated from 1990 population and McConnell area.

MedHIncome Median household income. 1990 Census

AvgHInc Average household income. 1990 Census

MedFamInc Median family income. 1990 Census

PerCapInc Per capita income. 1990 Census

>Poverty# Number of persons with incomes above the poverty level. 1990 Census.

>Poverty% Percent of persons with incomes above the poverty level. 1990 Census.

<Poverty# Number of persons with incomes below the poverty level. 1990 Census.

<Poverty% Percent of persons with incomes below the poverty level. 1990 Census.

UnempC% Unemployment rate. 1990 Census.

UnempS% Unemployment rate. Average of 6/90, 12/90, 6/91 and 6/92. Calculated from Mass Div of Employment Training reports.

White% Employment rate in white collar occupations: managerial, professional, technical, sales, and support. Calculated from 1990 Census.

Blue% Employment rate in blue collar occupations: service, farming, precision production, and operators. Calculated from 1990 Census.

MgrProf% Employment rate in executive, administrative, managerial and professional occupations. 1990 Census.

SalesCler% Employment rate in technical, sales, and clerical occupations. Calculated from 1990 Census.

AgForFish% Employment rate in farming, forestry and fishing, 1990 Census.

PrecCraft% Employment rate in precision production, craft, and repair. 1990 Census.

Optrs% Employment rate in machine, transportation and laborer occupations. 1990 Census.

Housing# Number of housing units. 1990 Census.

HsingOcc# Number of occupied housing units. 1990 Census

HsingOcc% Percent of total housing units that are occupied. Calculated from the 1990 Census.

YrBlt Median year of housing construction 1990 Census.

LURes% Multifamily, low, medium and high density residential. 1984/85. MacConnell.

LUAg% Cropland, pasture, orchard, and open land. 1984/85. MacConnell.

LUFor% Forest lands. 1984/85. MacConnell.

LUWet% Water, inland and salt wetland. 1984/85, MacConnell.

LUTrans% Airports, docks, railyards, truck terminals, divided highways. 1984/85. MacConnell.

LURec% Water-based, participation and spectator recreation. 1984/85. MacConnell.

LUInd% Heavy and light industry. 1984/85. MacConnell.

LUComm% Commercial, highway commercial, and shopping centers. 1984/85. MacConnell.

LUColnd% Commercial and industrial land use combined. 1984/85. MacConnell.

LUDev% Check. 1984/85. MacConnell.

Area1# Total area in acres. 1984/85. MacConnell.

NSCoords North-south state plane coordinates for town centers, from MassGIS political boundary coverage.

EWCoords East-west state plane coordinates for town centers, from MassGIS political boundaries coverage.

PupilDay Per pupil expenditures for regular day students, 1990-91. Source: Massachusetts Department of Education. (Zero values occur in some cities and towns in regional school systems.)

PupilTotal Total expenditures per pupil for regular, speciala needs, bilingual and occupational day students, 1990-91. Source: Massachusetts Department of Education. (Zero values occur in some cities and towns in regional school systems.)

PlymouthID Links for towns in Plymouth County.

Amh20miID Links for towns with centroids within 20 miles of the centroid of Amherst. Calculated from MassGIS data.

Bush# Votes for George Bush, 1992 Presidential Election. Source: Boston Globe. (Missing values are 0.)

Clinton# Votes for Bill Clinton, 1992 Presidential Election. Source: Boston Globe. (Missing values are 0.)

Perot# Votes for Ross Perot, 1992 Presidential Election. Source: Boston Globe.
(Missing values are 0.)

Perot% Percent of total vote for Ross Perot, 1992 Presidential Election.
Calculated from values published in the Boston Globe. (Missing values are 0.)

BostDist% Straight line distance from Boston in miles. Calculated from MassGIS
PNT data (political boundaries).

TownUC\$ Town names in upper case. (Used when joining files.)